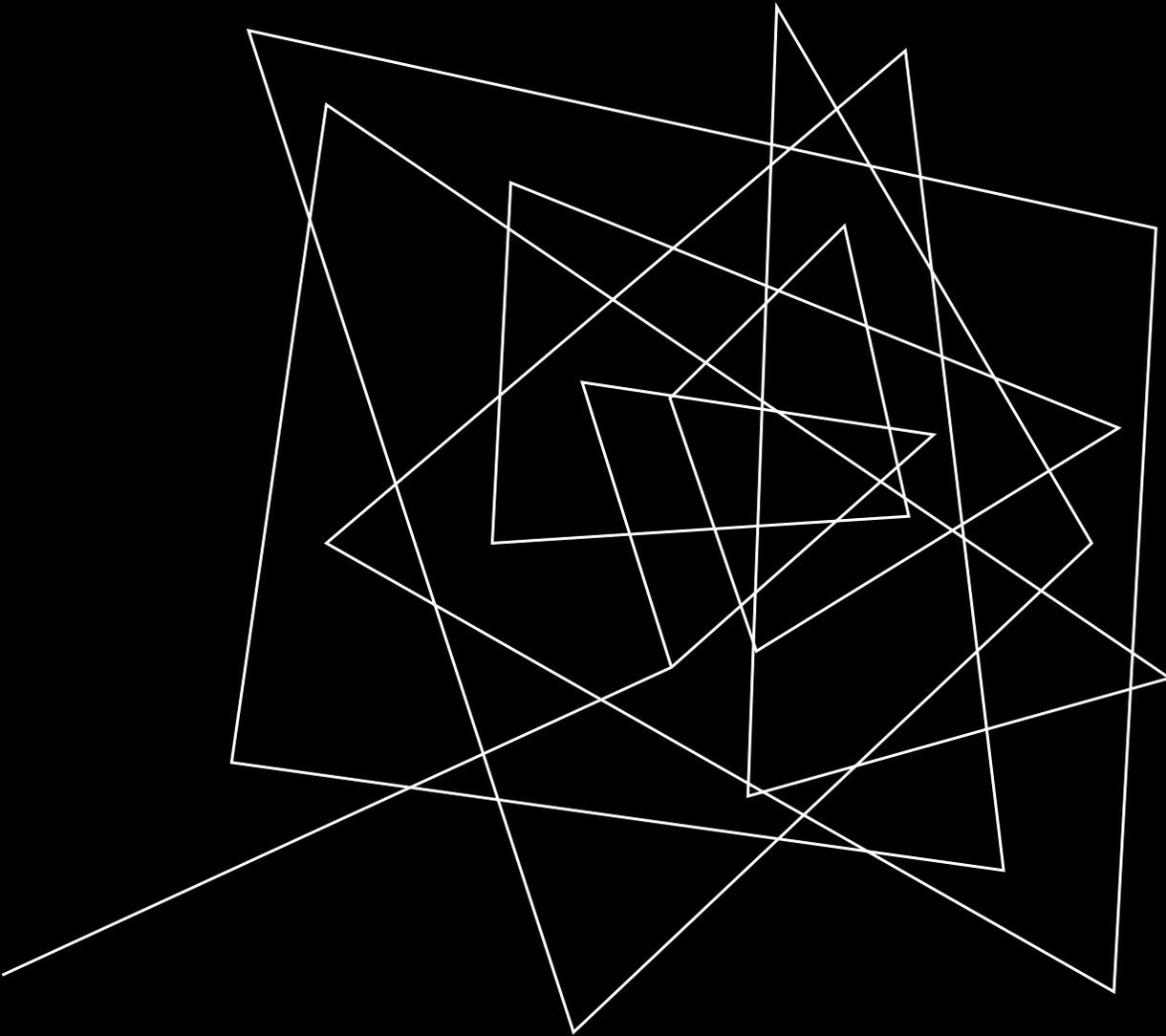




CITIZEN TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Fire Emergency Services Funding



CITIZEN TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

What options were presented to Task Force:

- Annexation of the White Salmon into Fire District #3
- Creation of a West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority
- Contract for Fire Service
- White Salmon Fire Department

CITIZEN TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

COMMUNITY TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Create a Regional Fire Authority under RCW 52.26

- Create a Regional Fire Authority (RFA) serving the current areas of WSFD and KCFD3. This should be a new district to take over the tasks of the two above mentioned jurisdictions. Formation of this RFA should simplify the inclusion of additional neighboring departments in the future, should this become desirable.

B. Create a Consistent Funding Source for the RFA -

Create a stable, consistent funding source for the Regional Fire Authority through a single property tax levy sufficient to meet the needs identified to provide improved fire and emergency services to the community in the future.

C. Create Annual and Long-Term Budgets to Meet Identified Needs

- Create an annual and long-term budget for the new Regional Fire Authority that includes elements to build a strong volunteer department. This should include:

1. Volunteer Recruitment Program
2. Volunteer Training Program
3. Leadership Development Program
4. Community Education and Engagement Program
5. Future Equipment and Facility Needs

CITIZEN TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

COMMUNITY TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

D. Recruit, Train and Retain an Excellent Corps of Volunteers –

Volunteers are the life blood of rural emergency response. The reasons to volunteer are many and varied, and good recruitment and efforts to support and retain volunteers is essential. To that end we recommend studying implementation of the following efforts.

1. High School education/training “Cadet” program – participants in the full curriculum of the program would graduate with fire certifications in addition to participating with the Fire District. (See Lyle Fire Department program) 2. Training – Training program focused on volunteer needs and availability. Targeted to advancing each volunteers’ interests and additional certifications, and to ensure the skills and emergency response within the RFA meet the needs of the community and volunteer safety. 3. Leadership – Advanced training and leadership requirements and opportunities for those interested. Should include tuition and travel. 108 4.Compensation – Volunteer compensation needs to be consistent with the effort and expenses of volunteers. 5.Community Engagement – Starts and stops with the volunteers. Publicly visible, inviting, knowledgeable, and educated community engagement improves local emergency prevention and response.

E. Create Performance Goals, Publicly Track Data & Report

Annually – Create performance goals, and a system to meaningfully track, measure and document emergency response in the RFA. Annually report on performance transparently and publicly with a plan for continuous improvement. In addition, an effort should be made to align the reporting standards amongst other coordinated agencies such as Klickitat EMS, Bingen Fire & Lyle Fire for a more complete view of all emergency services rendered.

CITIZEN TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

COMMUNITY TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

F. Coordination & Coverage with Emergency Medical Services

(EMS) – Given the significant gaps in the county-wide EMS system coverage, the RFA should negotiate a reciprocal agreement with the county to coordinate EMS resources and dispatch for improved coverage. It should also consider how to best provide its own ambulance service, given that Fire District 3 has an underused ambulance in its fleet.

G. Offset White Salmon Resident Property Taxes - When a new Regional Fire Authority is created, the City funding that has been provided for the White Salmon Fire Department in the past will no longer be spent on the fire department. However, City residents will have a new line item in their property taxes to pay for the Regional Fire Authority. Therefore, we recommend that the City of White Salmon reduce resident property taxes for the City by at least half to partially offset the increase in resident property taxes to pay for the new Regional Fire Authority.

H. Provide Community Education and Engagement – The Regional Fire Authority should be responsible for taking the lead on education and engagement with the community on several fronts. 1.Wildfire risks and prevention 2.Emergency response expectations 3.CPR/First aid